

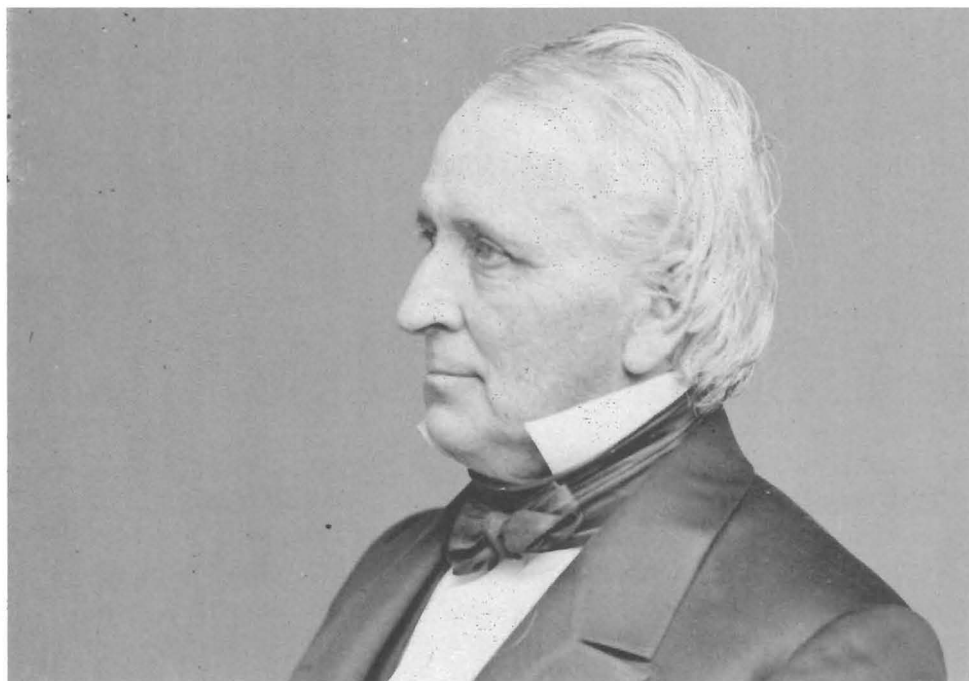
# RUTLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY

## *Quarterly*

VOLUME 40 NO. 4

2010

## Faces of the Past II: A Calendar



LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

**Solomon Foot (1802-1866)**

One of Rutland's most distinguished statesmen, Solomon Foot graduated from Middlebury College in 1826. After stints as principal of Castleton Seminary and as a tutor at the University of Vermont, he studied law and was admitted to the bar in 1831.

He served in the Vermont legislature for four terms in the 1830s and in the U.S. Congress from 1843-1847. In 1850 he was elected to the U.S. Senate where he served until his death in 1866.

During his final term in the Senate he served as president pro tempore of the Senate and was regarded as a crucial ally of Pres. Lincoln. It is said that he was among those considered for vice-president on Lincoln's first term ticket.

# About the Editor

Jacob Sherman recently retired as the reference and technical services librarian after 38 years at the Rutland Free Library. He also has served as Secretary of the Rutland Historical Society and is chairperson of its Publications Committee.

He has made numerous contributions to the Society's *Quarterlies*: "When the 'Babe' Came to Rutland – October 1919" *Rutland Historical Society Quarterly* (Vol. 30 No. 3); "Lost Buildings of Old Rutland: A Calendar", *Rutland Historical Society Quarterly* (Vol. 33 No. 4); "Lost Buildings of Old Rutland Revisited: A Calendar", *Rutland Historical Society Quarterly* (Vol. 34 No. 4); "Then and Now: A Calendar", *Rutland Historical Society Quarterly* (Vol. 35 No. 4); " 'People Make a Library' The Rutland Free Library at 120 Years", *Rutland Historical Society Quarterly* (Vol. 36 No. 3); "Lost Structures of Old Rutland: A Calendar", *Rutland Historical Society Quarterly* (Vol. 36 No. 4); "The Flood of 1927 In Rutland: A Calendar", *Rutland Historical Society Quarterly* (Vol. 37 No. 4); "The Art of Dr. Emelie Perkins: A Calendar", *Rutland Historical Society Quarterly* (Vol. 38 No. 4) and "Faces of the Past: A Calendar", *Rutland Historical Society Quarterly* (Vol.39 No. 4).

## Introduction

This year's calendar issue features a series of images and biographies of Rutland personages flowing from the 18th to the mid 19th Century.

The Society hopes that you will find these people an interesting and inspiring reminder of the rich and varied history of the old Town of Rutland.

The *Quarterly* is published by the Rutland Historical Society, 96 Center Street, Rutland VT 05701-4023. Co-editors: Jim Davidson and Jacob Sherman. Copies are \$2 each plus \$1 per order. Membership in the Society includes a subscription to the *Quarterly* and the *Newsletter*. Copyright © 2010 The Rutland Historical Society, Inc. ISSN 0748-2493.

# **Faces of the Past II: A Calendar**

Compiled by Jacob Sherman

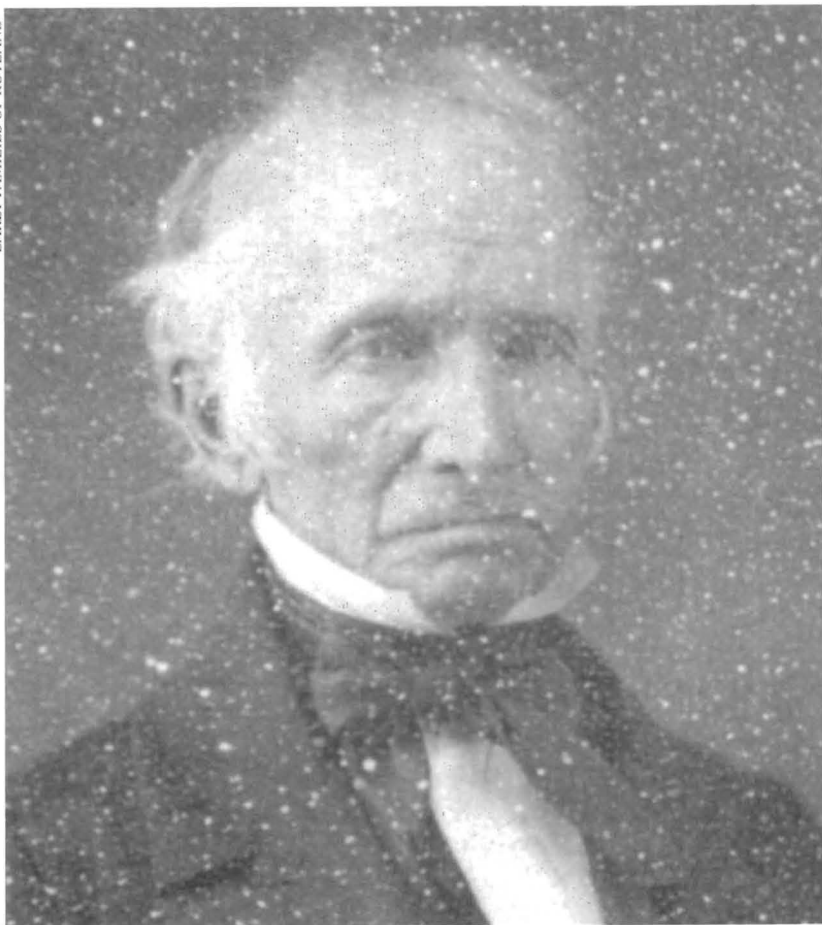
## **Rutland Comes of Age**

After the tumultuous and unsettled years of the Revolution and the War of 1812, Rutland was poised for an era of dynamic growth. Men such as Solomon Foot were rising in the political sphere, railroads were about to burst on the scene totally revolutionizing transportation and trade, religious institutions were growing, and the marble industry was in a constant state of flux as technologies improved and new companies launched, grew, and consolidated.

The figures selected for this calendar all played an important role in this mid-19th century Rutland. A particularly interesting facet of these individuals is that many could not simply be defined as one thing or the other. A man such as Ambrose Lincoln Brown, for example, not only practiced law, he was part owner of a paper mill, a probate court judge, an editor of the Herald, a surveyor, and from 1827 to 1848 served as Rutland Town Clerk!

Our Faces of the Past II includes as well two marble industry giants; two ministers who were instrumental in the growth of their churches; two railroad titans, one of whom went on to be elected governor; an architect and ardent Democrat who founded his own newspaper; a free black man born in Rutland who went on to become the first black president of an American college, and two devoted wives.

As always, your compiler has drawn most of the pictures and information from two books – The History of Rutland, Vermont, 1761-1861 and Early Families of Rutland, Vermont. An incalculable debt is owed to Dawn Hance who wrote and edited these volumes and to Marvel Swan and Donald Swan who provided much historical and genealogical research. Thanks to them and the Rutland Historical Society the fascinating legacy of early Rutland is preserved for future generations.



### **Dr. James W. Porter, (ca. 1780-1854)**

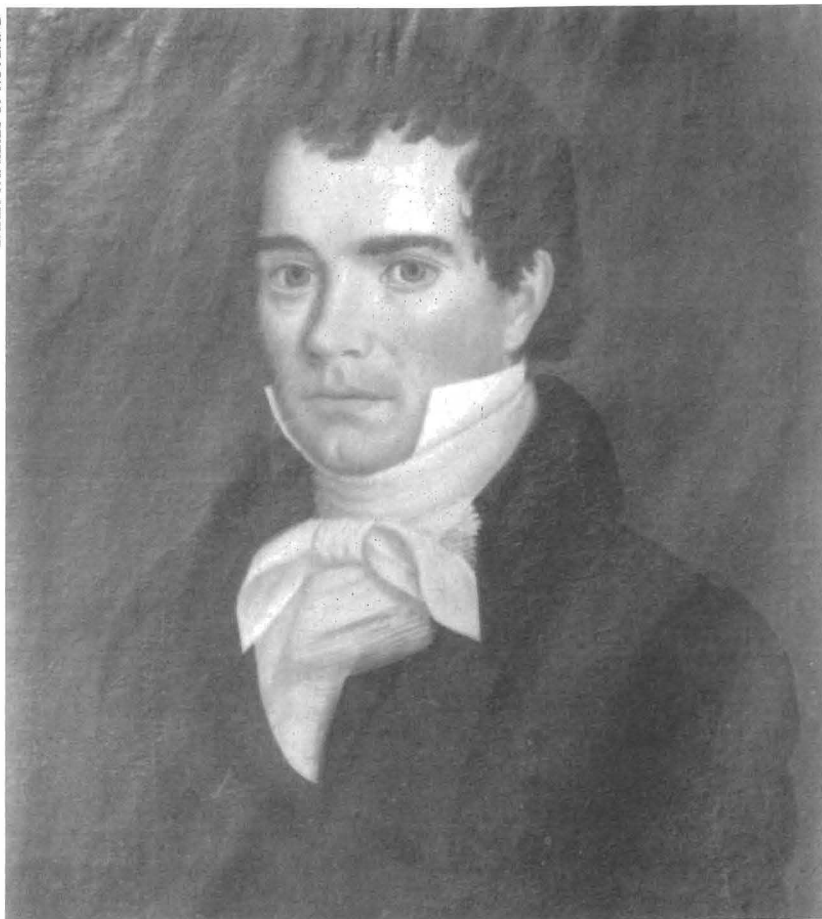
Born about 1780 on Long Island, he was just 18 months old when he lost his father, a surgeon serving in the British army. His mother took him to Halifax, Nova Scotia, where she remarried and a few years later also died. At the age of seven he was shipped to Rutland where he was taken under the wing of an uncle, Dr. Ezekiel Porter.

During his teenage years he served as a steward aboard a ship bound for the West Indies that was captured by French privateers. The crew was imprisoned but later released by a British vessel. Young James found his way back to New York City with only a penny in his pocket.

Licensed to practice medicine as early as 1801, he made his reputation in 1813 when he found himself the only available physician in Rutland when the town was struck by an epidemic. It is said all the other doctors were away serving with the army on Lake Champlain during the War of 1812.

# JANUARY 2011

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
						1  New Year's Day
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17  Martin Luther King, Jr. Day	18	19	20	21	22
23  30	24  31	25	26	27	28	29



## **Ambrose Lincoln Brown (1795-1865)**

A.L. Brown could be described as something of a Renaissance man. He was a lawyer, judge, civil engineer, legislator, paper mill owner, and surveyor – often all at the same time.

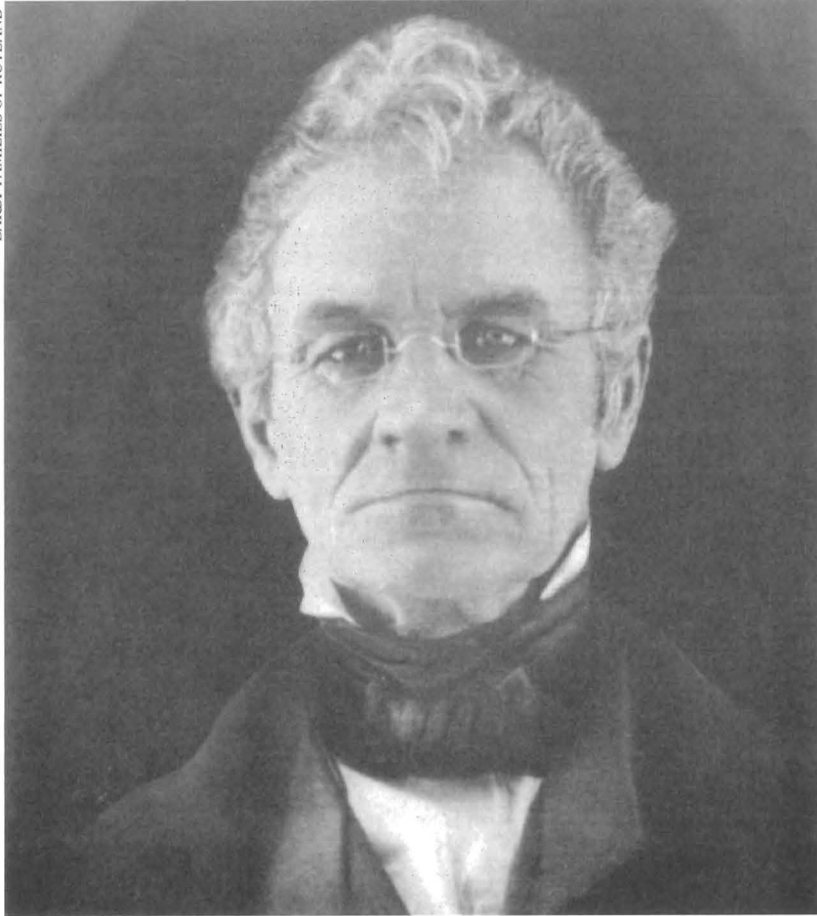
He graduating from Middlebury College in 1816, he read law with Charles K. Williams and was admitted to the bar in 1819. He served as Rutland County Probate Judge from 1833 to 1835 and again in 1839. From 1844 to 1847 he was a judge of the Rutland County Court.

In 1833 he re-surveyed the “turnpike” from Stockbridge to Rutland. In 1843 he oversaw the survey of a route for the Rutland-Burlington Railroad.

Earlier in his career Brown had been one of the incorporators of the Rutland-Whitehall Railroad Bank and had also purchased an interest in William Gookin’s paper mill in Center Rutland.

# FEBRUARY 2011

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
	Valentine's Day					Lincoln's Birthday
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
	President's Day Washington's Birthday					
27	28					



## **Reuben Rose Thrall, 1795-1890**

Reuben R. Thrall is perhaps best known today for his service as Rutland's station-master on the Underground Railroad.

He served as clerk at the post office under William D. Smith with whom he studied law and later joined as a partner. From 1822 to 1829 he served as the postmaster of Rutland village.

In 1832 he served on a committee to select a site for a new edifice for the Trinity Episcopal Church and in 1836 he served a year as state's attorney.

In January 1843, he was one of a number of Rutland men appointed to supervise the surveying of the proposed Rutland to Burlington Railroad.

In early 1847, he was one of the original incorporators of Rutland Village.

Thrall lived to be 95 and at the time of his death was the oldest member of the Rutland County Bar.



# MARCH 2011

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9 Ash Wednesday	10	11	12
13 Daylight Savings Begins	14	15	16	17 St. Patrick's Day	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		



## Isabella (Hopkins) Brown, 1796-1868

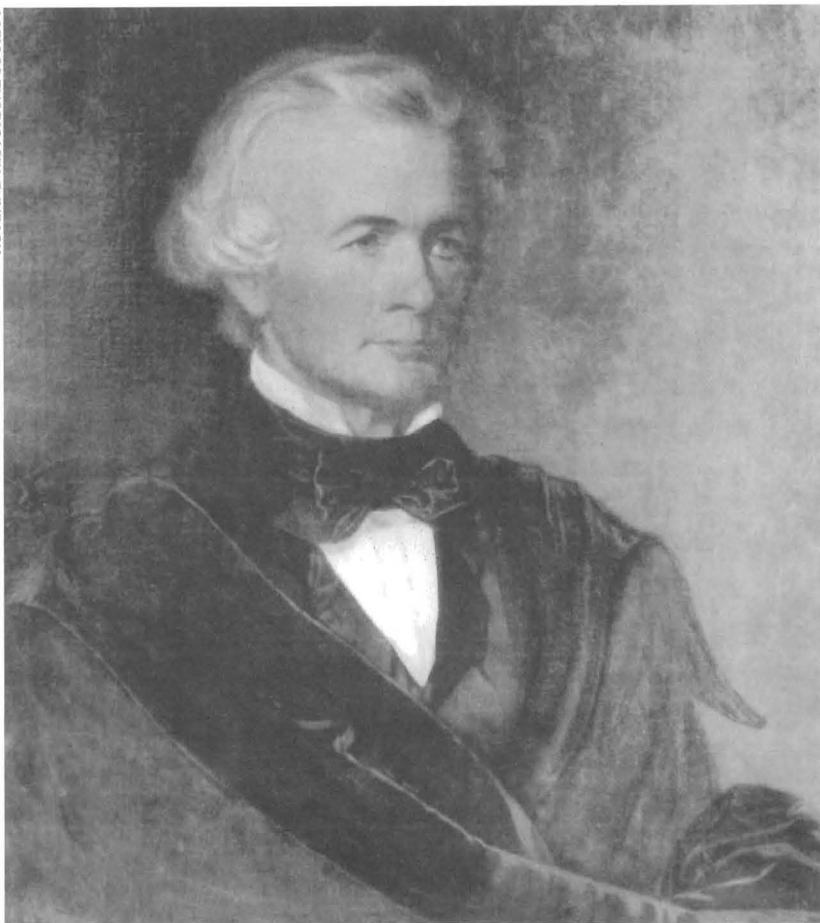
Isabella Maria Hopkins was the daughter of Hiram and Rachel Hopkins. On 20 April 1820 she wed Ambrose Lincoln Brown in Middlebury.

Over the next nineteen years she bore seven children beginning with William Jenkins in 1821. At least three of the Browns' children lived well into the 20th century with the death of the youngest, Eleanor Taylor, not occurring until 1932.

After their marriage, Isabella and Ambrose resided at 26 West Street but later moved to the Jenkins house on the northeast corner of West and Nichols Streets. Mrs. Brown died 3 November 1868 and is buried with her husband in Evergreen Cemetery.

# APRIL 2011

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
Palm Sunday		Passover			Good Friday	
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
Easter						



### **William Young Ripley (1797-1875)**

Born in Middlebury in 1797, he was raised on a farm in Weybridge and largely self-educated. Displaying a keen talent for business at an early age, he ventured to South Carolina and New York City and by age 32 had become a wealthy man.

Retiring back home to Vermont, he moved to Rutland in 1837 and in 1844 built two mills for the sawing of marble on the Otter Creek near his home in Center Rutland. Partnering from 1846 to 1850 with William Barnes, who supplied the marble from his quarries in West Rutland, he continued in the business until 1865 when he transferred his interests to his three sons.

Ripley helped organize the Rutland County Bank in 1861 and served as its president. Adjacent to the bank he built the Rutland Opera House in 1868. A favorite institution of his was the Methodist Troy Conference Academy in Poultney to which he donated heavily.

# MAY 2011

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>8</b>  Mother's Day	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>15</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b>  Armed Force's Day
<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>  Memorial Day	<b>31</b>				



### **Harriet Mead Porter (1808-1877)**

Little is recorded of this great grand daughter of Rutland's first settler, James Mead. However, her portrait reveals a striking and almost contemporary-looking woman.

Harriet Mead was born in 1808 and in 1831 married the Rev. Jedediah Parmalee. Less than five years later at the age of 36, her husband passed away while they were residing in Ohio. Returning to Rutland, Harriet in 1851 married Henry W. Porter, a son of Dr. James Porter. She died at age 69 on 27 October 1877.

# JUNE 2011

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	Flag Day	22	23	24	25
Father's Day	27	28	29	30		



## John Cain, 1809-1880

John was one of 19th-century Rutland's more colorful characters. Born on the Isle of Man, Cain came to Rutland in 1832.

In 1842-1843 Cain sought surveying work on the proposed Boston-Burlington railroad. An early advocate for and stockholder in the project, he wrote a letter to the editor of the Herald in 1849 after he had not been included among the dignitaries who made the ceremonial train ride connecting the two ends of the line at Mount Holly.

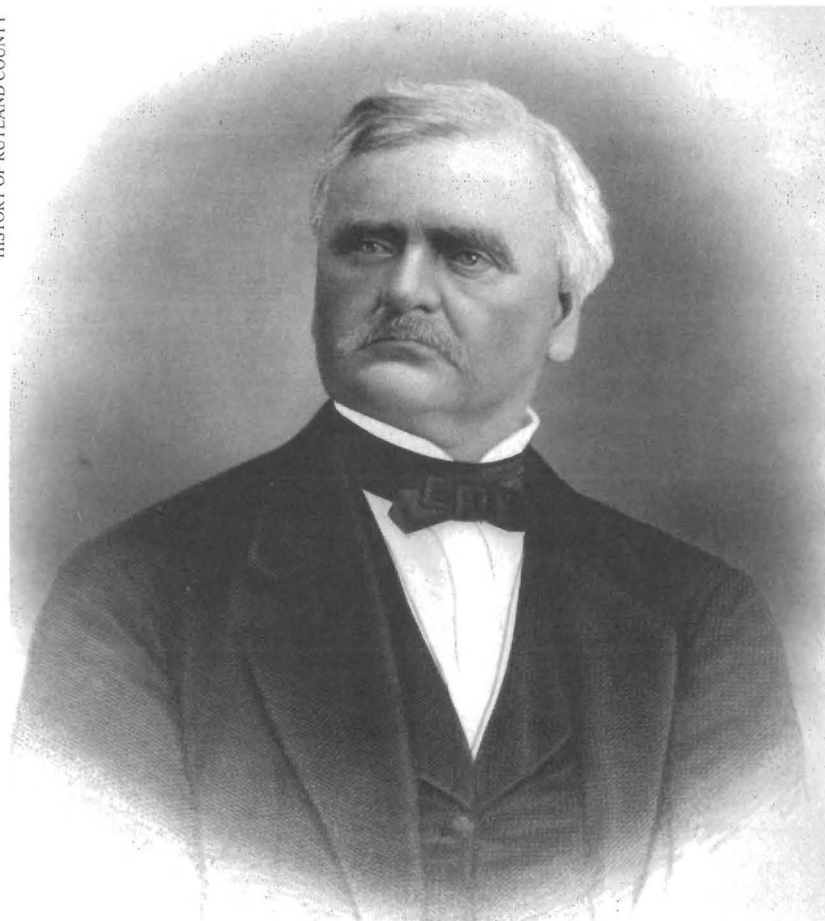
From 1853 to 1860 he served as postmaster. He contributed his architectural knowledge to the construction of the then new federal courthouse and post office at Center and Court Streets and the new County Courthouse across the street.

In 1857 Cain founded the Rutland Courier as a vehicle for his ardent Democratic political views.



# JULY 2011

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
					1	2
3	4 <small>Independence Day</small>	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						



## Charles Sheldon, 1813-1889

Charles Sheldon was a marble man whose influence as a civic leader in Rutland was primarily felt in the West Parish.

Sheldon's brother Lorenzo, along with David Morgan, Jr., and Charles H. Slason, had been involved in the marble industry in West Rutland since the 1840's.

Incorporated as Sheldon, Morgan, & Slason in 1854, the company, now joined by Charles, owned quarries and erected a large mill that could saw marble night and day. By 1855 the quarries and mill were employing 250 workers and producing 250,000 feet of marble annually.

Becoming Sheldon & Slason in 1857, the company within a few years had added two more quarries. Nearly a quarter of a million lettered headstones for national cemeteries are said to have been produced from its quarries.

Sheldon along with others deeded the land for the construction of St. Bridget's Church.

# AUGUST 2011

SUNDAY

MONDAY

TUESDAY

WEDNESDAY

THURSDAY

FRIDAY

SATURDAY

	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>14</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>
	Battle of Bennington Day					
<b>21</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b>			



## Horace Henry Baxter (1818-1884)

Henry Baxter was born in Saxton's River, Vermont in 1818. His career began with a contract to pave the depot grounds at Bellows Falls, which led to other contracts for laying track. Still in his early 20s, he gained a reputation for efficiency and ability to overcome obstacles.

Within a decade or so he had gained control of the Chicago & Northwestern Railroad and become a player on Wall Street. He served as president of the New York Central line until ceding control to Cornelius Vanderbilt.

He came to Rutland in 1854 at the age of 36, and built Grove Hall, one of the most lavish houses ever built in Vermont, as a summer home.

As the Civil War approached, Baxter grasped a leadership role by having Gov. Fairbanks appoint him state Adjutant General and Inspector General.

# SEPTEMBER 2011

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
				1	2	3
4	5 Labor Day	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29 Rosh Hashanah	30	



### **John Boardman Page (1826-1885)**

John Boardman Page was born in Rutland in 1826, the son of William Page, Esq., Cashier of the Bank of Rutland. This bank, chartered in 1824, was the first in Rutland and the fourth in the state.

When John was 16 he began working in the bank. Eventually he became bank president and along with that became a major power in Vermont railroading and other industries. At various times he was a partner in the Brandon Manufacturing Company, an early producer of the Howe Scale, a partner in the Sutherland Falls Marble Company; president of the Rutland Railroad, and a vice-president of the Central Vermont Railroad.

Page served in the Vermont House of Representatives from 1852 to 1854 and from 1860-1866 was state treasurer. This was followed by a term as governor from 1867 to 1869.

# OCTOBER 2011

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8  Yom Kippur
9	10  Columbus Day	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31 Halloween					



## **Martin H. Freeman, 1826-1889**

Tutored by Rev. William Mitchell, pastor of the Congregational Church in Rutland, Martin was admitted at age 19 to Middlebury College where he graduated as salutatorian.

Upon graduation, he accepted a position in Pittsburgh, PA at the Allegheny Institute that later became Avery College. By 1856 he had been named president of this institution, making him the first black president of an American college.

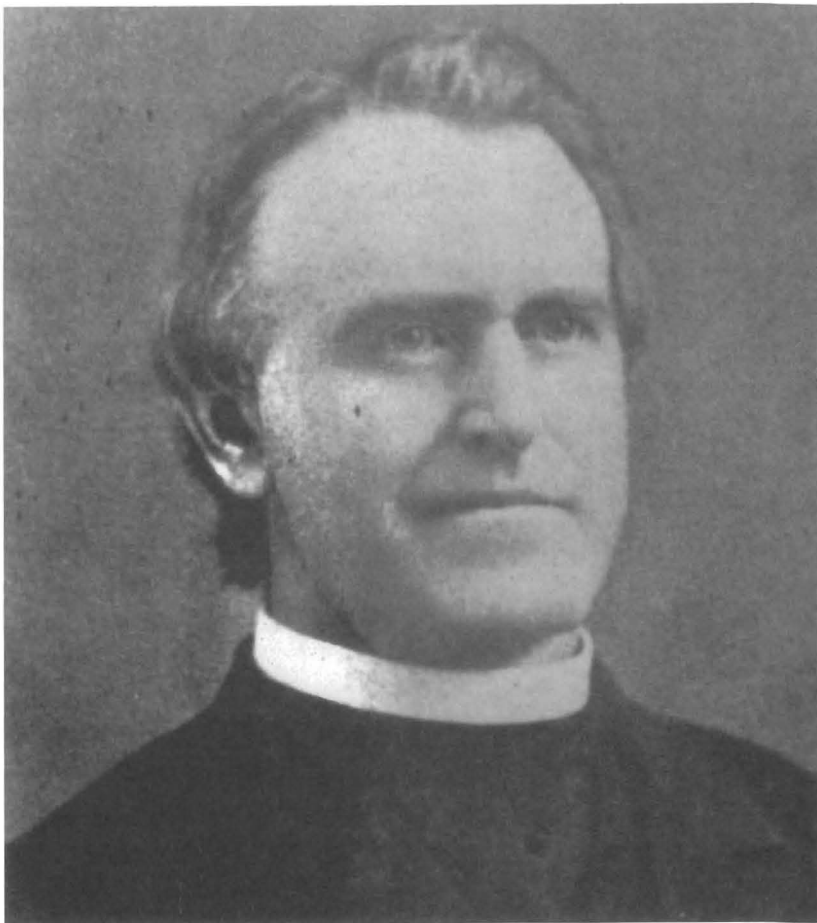
He became passionately involved in the African-American emigration movement and ultimately, with his family, departed for Africa to join the faculty of Monrovia College in Liberia.

Freeman never lost the warm feeling he had for his childhood home and last visited Rutland in 1887. He was named president of Monrovia College in 1889 shortly before his death and was buried in Africa.



# NOVEMBER 2011

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
		1	2	3	4	5
6  Daylight Savings Ends	7	8	9	10	11  Veteran's Day	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24  Thanksgiving Day	25	26
27	28	29	30			



### **Father Charles J. Boylan (1828-1886)**

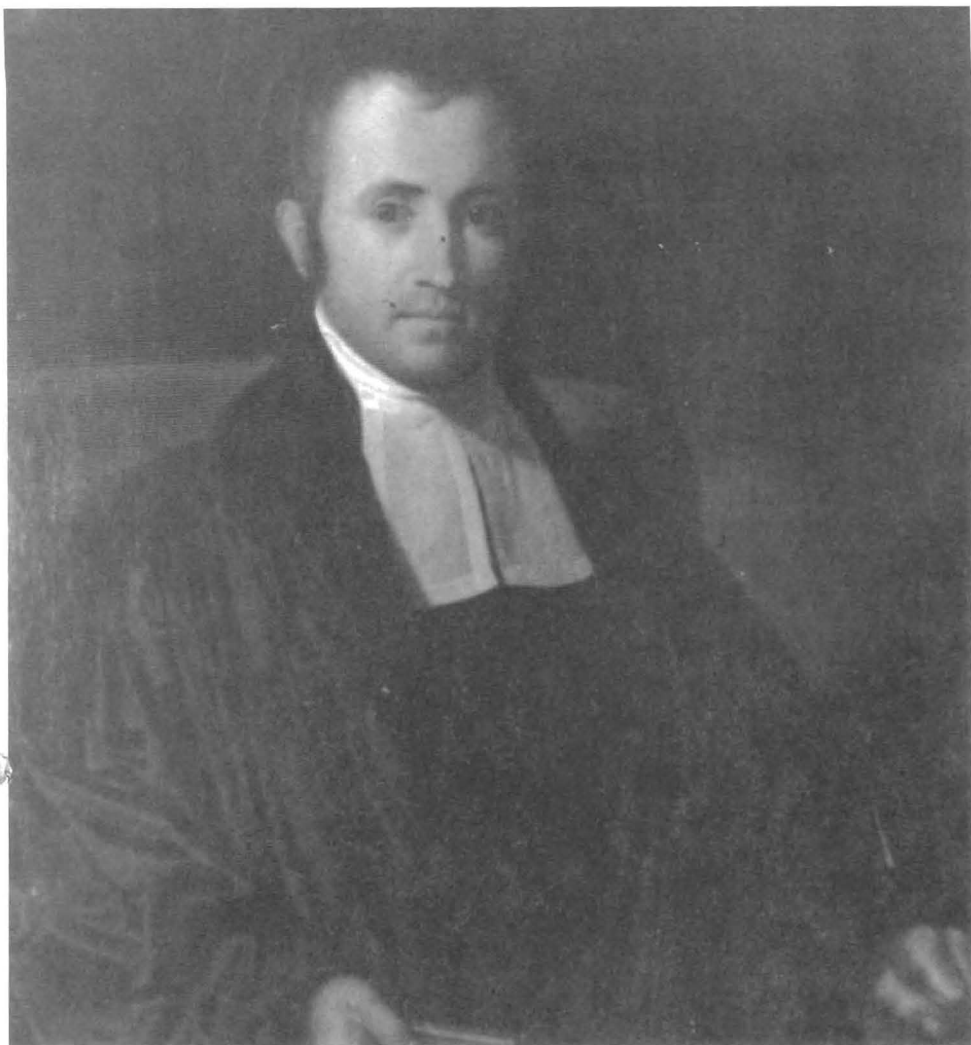
Father Boylan came to Rutland in 1857 as pastor of St. Peter's Parish. He inherited a small church on lower Meadow Street that was becoming too small to serve its flock. In 1867 he purchased the "Ledge Lot" on Mechanics Street (now Convent Avenue) and obtained plans from the New York architect, Patrick C. Keely.

Construction was commenced in 1868 with the building stone being quarried from the very spot on which the church was to be erected. The men of the parish toiled on the new edifice during the evening hours after completing their regular strenuous workday.

Father Boylan died on 4 December 1886, and at his funeral a eulogist noted: "Rutland has great cause to be thankful that a man so wise, thoughtful, liberal and competent has.... lived....among us." He was buried beside the church he built. A memorial statue stands over his grave.

# DECEMBER 2011

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7 Pearl Harbor Day	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21 Hanukkah	22	23	24
25 Christmas Day	26	27	28	29	30	31



**Rev. John A. Hicks (1802-1869)**

Rev. John Hicks was born in New York City in 1802, graduated from Columbia University in 1823 and was ordained to the priesthood in 1828. Prior to coming to Rutland, he served as rector at Episcopal churches in Easton, PA and Troy, NY.

His tenure in Rutland extended for 28 years during which time he came to be highly esteemed both by parishioners and throughout the state. Beginning in 1859 he lost the power of his voice and felt compelled to resign his pulpit which he did in July 1860. A few weeks after that his wife died of typhus fever, leaving behind nine children. He died in Burlington in 1869.